

Message Text

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ORIGIN INT-08

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COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 EPA-04 INR-10 IO-14 L-03 NSF-04

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS STATE 057202

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, MX

SUBJECT: IMPACT OF TOURISM ON BAJA CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENT

REF: A) STATE 244838, B) MEXICO 9544, C) MEXICO 1773

1. LAST DECEMBER EMBASSY VIEWS WERE REQUESTED (REF A) ON POSSIBLE OFFER BY INTERIOR DEPARTMENT TO MEXICO OF EXPERTS TO WORK WITH BAJA CALIFORNIA OFFICIALS ON JOINT EFFORT TO DEAL WITH IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL VALUES THROUGHOUT BAJA PENINSULA EXPECTED TO RESULT FROM AMERICAN TOURIST USE OF RECENTLY COMPLETED BAJA TRANSPENINSULA HIGHWAY.

2. SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF EMBASSY VIEWS (REF B), INTERIOR BEGAN EXAMINING MEXICO'S CONCERNS IN DETAIL IN ORDER TO FORMULATE A PROPOSAL. HOWEVER, INTERIOR REQUIRES UNCLASSIFIED

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MORE SPECIFIC DETAILS ABOUT MEXICO'S CONCERNS AND IDEAS

FOR JOINT COOPERATION. INTERIOR, THEREFORE, WOULD LIKE EMBASSY TO TALK INFORMALLY WITH GOM OFFICIALS PRESENT AT OCTOBER BAJA CONFERENCE (REF A) TO FIND OUT WHETHER A JOINT EFFORT IN THE BAJA PENINSULA IS STILL DESIRED, AND, IF IT IS, WHETHER MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ABOUT THE KIND, DEGREE, AND FORM OF SUCH COOPERATION. GOM OFFICIALS INTERIOR HAS IN MIND ARE MARIO JOSE CASCI, DIRECTOR GENERAL, CODIBAC (MEXICAN FEDERAL AGENCY THAT SPONSORED

BAJA CONFERENCE) AND FERNANDO SEPULVEDA AMOR, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, SUBSECRETARIAT FOR IMPROVEMENT OF ENVIRONMENT. EMBASSY IS AUTHORIZED TO INFORM FOREIGN OFFICE OF THESE INFORMAL TALKS.

3. MEXICO'S CONCERNS, AS EXPRESSED AT BAJA CONFERENCE, WERE APPLICABLE THROUGHOUT BAJA PENINSULA; AND THEY ENCOMPASSED PROTECTION OF NATIONAL PARKS; ENDANGERED WILDLIFE ENVIRONMENTS; HABITATS OF MIGRATORY SPECIES; FRAGILE DESERT, MOUNTAIN AND SEASHORE AREAS; SITES OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ARCHEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

4. IT IS INTERIOR'S VIEW THAT PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF SUCH AREAS ARE CLEARLY DEPENDENT ON ESTABLISHMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND TOURISM SAFEGUARDS. INTERIOR HAS EXPERTISE IN THESE SECTORS AND IS WILLING TO RESPOND TO MEXICO'S REQUEST FOR A JOINT COOPERATIVE EFFORT, SINCE SUCH ACTIVITY WOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERIOR'S LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ESTABLISHING, PRESERVING OR ENHANCING RECREATIONAL AREAS USED BY AMERICAN CITIZENS AND FOR PROTECTING ENDANGERED MIGRATORY WILDLIFE SPECIES. IN OTHER WORDS, INTERIOR CONSIDERS THAT A COOPERATIVE MEXICO-US UNDERTAKING IN BAJA PENINSULA WOULD BE OF MUTUAL ADVANTAGE, AND THEREFORE IS WILLING, WITHIN LIMITS, TO USE INTERIOR FUNDS TO DEFRAY EXPENSE OF ITS PART OF JOINT EFFORT.

5. WITH THE COOPERATION OF EPA, INTERIOR IS RESERVING THE OPTION OF USING THE CHANNEL FOR COOPERATION WITH MEXICO SUGGESTED IN REF B. HOWEVER, IN ABSENCE OF GOM UNCLASSIFIED

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APPROVAL OF THE EPA--MEXICO UMBRELLA AGREEMENT (REF C), INTERIOR REQUESTS THAT EMBASSY PROCEED NOW WITH INFORMAL, INFORMATION-SEEKING TALKS SUGGESTED IN PARAGRAPH TWO ABOVE. SUBSEQUENT TO THOSE TALKS, INTERIOR WOULD BE WILLING TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO MEXICO CITY FOR FURTHER INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH GOM REPRESENTATIVES, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR ANY COOPERATIVE UNDERTAKING IN BAJA PENINSULA. KISSINGER

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